

REMARKS

Claims 1-37 are pending in this application. The Office has required a restriction and species election. The Office submitted the following invention groupings: Group I consisting of claims 1-25, and 37 and Group II consisting of claims 26-36. For the election of species, the Office indicated the following species: Species I - Figure 2A, Species II - Figure 2B, Species III - Figures 3-4, Species IV - Figures 5-6, and Species V - Figures 7-10.

Phone Interview

On August 12, 2004, a phone interview was conducted with the examiner, Mr. Tuan T. Dinh. Mr. Dinh agreed that a species encompassing Figure 2C had been omitted from the Office action and that any claim or claims drawn to Figure 2C should be placed in either species I or II. He further agreed that a search would be conducted on any such claim or claims if species I or II were elected.

Restriction Election

Applicant elects Group I consisting of claims 1-25 and 37.

Species Election

Applicant elects species V. The Group I claims readable on species V are: (a) generic claim 1 and species claims 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 18; (b) generic claim 19 and species claims 22, 23, 24, and 25; and (c) species claim 37.

Traversal of Restriction of Species I and II


While Applicant has not elected either Species I or Species II, Applicant traverses the restriction between these species on the ground that, while patentably distinct, the species are so similar in nature that the Office would experience no undue burden in combining its search on the two species. Applicant believes that any search conducted for one of these species would turn up all art relevant to the other species. Therefore, a restriction separating the claims to these species into separate groups is improper.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has made the elections required by the Office. Please charge a one month extension fee and any other fees that might be due, excluding the issue fee, to deposit account 50-1673.

Respectfully,

Date: 9/13/04


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